

There are acts of kindness done
which seem as if they were direct
results of inspiration. This is not,
to be sure, like the loaf of bread to
the starving man which comes just
in time to save life. But it is like
a providence that the mystery of
the little creature's coming to me as he
has done seems almost as great as
that of his strange and inconceivably
remote existence.

I have not had time to do more
than look over the volume you have
kindly sent me, but I see that
all the essays are full of interest for
me. I hope you enjoyed our day half
as much as I did. Believe me, dear Dr. Gray,
Faithfully yours
O. W. Holmes

[Gift of Susan Loring, June 27, 1984]

296 Beacon St. July 2^d
1878.

My dear Dr. Gray,

I do not know just
how to thank you - for the
trilobite was a complete
surprise and delight; my
eyes beyond measure. I was
guiltless of the least thought
of a hint, for I had not
the slightest reason to
suppose that you a
botanist, had any such
specimen in your possession.

I did once say to Agassiz in so many words that I wanted a trilobite to be before me as an object of imaginative contemplation, and he spoke as if he would find one for me, and no doubt meant to - but I forgot it. - It is so strange that I should have happened to speak of my fancy before you, who could understand it, who could grasp my longing and more than that, who could even part with so charming a specimen for the sake of giving pleasure. You can

hardly believe how much pleasure that little articulate gives me. It was a cherished fancy to which I have often given expression as I did the other day, that I wanted two objects before my eyes constantly to carry me back, one into the planet's history, a trilobite, and one into man's history an Egyptian scarabee. I think I know when I can get my scarabee and I mean to have that mounted as I said I should the trilobite (in which you anticipated me) as a paper-weight. Sometimes